

Preparation for the project.

The Work Mentor project was originally a project some of the partners had applied for in England in 2010 but it did not get accepted. VMA was working with Riverside, IFSAT, Skjetlein, Jules Rieffel and Axxell on the POETE project 2008 – 2010 with four other partners. By the end of that project in October 2010 some of the partners suggested that VMA would adopt the Work Mentor idea and deliver an application to the Icelandic Leonardo National Agency.

VMA got a preparatory visit grant from the Icelandic Leonardo da Vinci NA and Jóhannes Árnason travelled to Hereford England January 15th - 18th 2011 and worked with Philip Broomhead on the application for the Work Mentor project. An Icelandic version of the narrative of the trip is available.

All the partners sent their Letters of Intent and the final version of the application and budget was sent between the partners and agreed upon. The application was delivered in the PDF document to the proper EU agency before the deadline in February 2011.

Andres Petursson at the Icelandic Leonardo Agency told VMA in April/May that their application had been rated positively and then in August 2011 VMA got the message that the Work Mentor Project had been approved in Iceland along with two other Tol Leonardo projects.

All the partners prepared for the first Partner's Meeting in Wales 10th and 11th October 2011. Gower College Swansea arranged for accommodation and other practical things.

The contract between VMA and the Leonardo Agency in Iceland was signed at a meeting in Reykjavik [September 29th](#) 2011.

Preparation for the first Project meeting.

In VMA we decided that we would send three people to PM1. Jóhannes Árnason the Project coordinator, he was also working on the POETE project. Óskar Ingi Sigurðsson who is a teacher and department head in the electrical department in VMA and had been involved with the POETE project. The third from VMA was Ketill Sigurðarson who has been teaching VMA's construction department and is working on a program to increase the possibilities VMA offers to students that have difficulty in coping with the normal studies in VMA. Ketill will be working with the people we are contacting about the Work Mentor Project in workplaces.

We decided it was important to have more than two people from VMA because we wanted to be sure what the project is about and that more people in VMA would be knowledgeable about the project. Also sending three people would increase the knowledge VMA will get from the meetings and this will lead to better understanding of the importance of learning from others. This decision underlines the dedication on behalf of VMA to working on the project with the goal of taking in new skills and methods for working with students and workplaces.

Partner Meeting 1 Swansea Wales. Host: Gower College Swansea.

A narrative about the trip from Iceland to Wales and back is available in Icelandic.

Because of a price policy of Icelandair it can be cheaper to travel so that the trip will cover the night before Sunday even if this costs an extra night. This was the case for this trip. Therefore we travelled on a Saturday from Iceland to London/Reading.

We began our travel to Wales Saturday October 9th from Akureyri and then from Keflavik International Airport to London Heathrow arriving there late afternoon. We took the Rail Air bus to Reading and stayed the night there. Andres Petursson from the Leonardo NA was travelling with us to attend the meeting. Sunday we used the train from Reading to Swansea and a taxi from the train station to Mumbles where we stayed.

Caroline Townsend Jones and others at Gower College Swansea had made all arrangements. We had a common dinner Sunday night. The meetings were held Monday and Tuesday and we travelled back to Akureyri on Wednesday October 12th. The minutes of the meeting are found in a document. The signed attending sheets for both meeting days and a picture of the group are included.

One of the biggest items on the agenda for the meeting was that we needed to cut the budget because we did not get all the grant we asked for. This was done so that all partners would cut their budget by 1,500 Euros and we would cut the cost allocated to the website by 2,500 Euros and VMA would try to find cheaper methods for starting and running a website for the project.

Autumn and winter 2011 – 2012

Inventory of needs and administration

In October, November and December 2011 the work in VMA was on two things. One is translating the documents and introducing these to teachers in VMA and to the people we need to contact in workplaces. Among these were the survey for the inventory of needs. The other part of the work is concerned with administration and running the project. Johannes Arnason has covered most of the work.

Returning to Iceland after PM1 in Wales Johannes worked on the partner contracts, finding someone to sketch up a logo and telling people about the Work Mentor project. Jóhannes published a story about the trip to Wales including a few pictures on the VMA website.

Every day along with teaching, some emails needed attention, about the payments for subsistence in Wales and other things.

In VMA it was decided that Kristín Petra Guðmundsdóttir would take part in the Workmentor project. Kristín is a master goldsmith. She teaches at VMA metal department and has been working with the students that have difficulty in school.

Wednesday October 24th 2011 Sævar Pétursson, the corporate contact person from the township of Akureyri, visited VMA. Jóhannes showed him the school and discussed the cooperation of the school and firms and institutions in Akureyri aimed at the group of students that find it hard to stay in school and often have difficulty in academic subjects. VMA is actively

working at work placements for these students and Work Mentor is one of the canals for this cooperation with workplaces.

We decided to meet again and discuss Work Mentor and other projects VMA is working on connecting VMA and workplaces.

Work Mentor Logo

Wednesday November 2nd Hallgrímur Stefán Ingólfsson, a teacher at the VMA art department, sent two suggestions for a Work Mentor logo. Jóhannes sent the suggestions to the other partners for review, suggesting the use of one of them, even with the possibility of using the word for Work Mentor from the language of each partner as a version of the logo.

The partners responded and one of the suggestions was agreed on.

External Evaluation / collaboration with University of Akureyri.

Jóhannes contacted Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir at the Akureyri University. She takes care of students in Masters programs at the Teachers Department of the University.

In the meeting with Anna Þóra Jóhannes asked for an opportunity to introduce Work Mentor and other projects to the students looking for a subject to cover in their Master's theses. The idea was that some of the things needed for the Work Mentor project might be interesting for students (most of them practicing teachers) in their school administration program. Included are external evaluation of the Work Mentor piloting, studying how to control and evaluate change in schools and researching the mentoring process.

Also we would discuss other opportunities for students in a masters program to use real life projects as a model to look at.

Jóhannes sent an email to Anna Þóra and they decided to meet Tuesday November 8th 2011 in the University.

Partner contracts and payments.

At the PM1 meeting in Wales and shortly after this Bas Timmers from IFSAT asked that some statement about copyright would be included in the agreements between VMA as the beneficiary and the other partners. After contacting both Gower College as the main contributor of materials into the project and the Icelandic NA we decided that we would not include anything extra about copyright but later we would discuss this issue at a meeting and note the rights and duties of each partner concerning copyright and the right to use the materials in the project.

In November and December Jóhannes and others at VMA worked on the contracts, signing them and sending out the signed copies for each partner to sign and send one copy back. After this the first payments were transferred to each partner.

The most important work done was however the **Inventory of needs**. Philip Broomhead in England prepared a survey to use with workplaces to get answers about how the workplaces were working with students/beginners in the workplace. Each partner translated the survey and administered it to 8 - 20 employers. After this the results were sent to Philip who prepared a report on the results.

The report was finished in February 2012. The report is available at the Project website.

Website.

Jóhannes made an agreement (November 2012, a formal agreement has not yet been prepared) with Sveinn Sverrisson about a website for the project. Sveinn suggested the use of a Wiki software and format. Sveinn then prepared the format and gave instructions about the use of the software. Jóhannes did most of the editing introducing the project and entering information into the website.

External Evaluation.

In March and April 2012 Jóhannes discussed the external evaluation with the School Development Centre at the University of Akureyri. It was decided that they would take care of the external evaluation of the project. Sólveig Zophoníasdóttir will do most of the work evaluating the project.

Final conference.

Jóhannes also discussed the final conference with the School Development Centre at the University of Akureyri. The centre has been organizing conferences in Akureyri on education a few times. The next conference will be held late September - early October 2013. It was decided that the WorkMentor Project would take part in the conference and hold a seminar on the project. Also that the university would take part in the discussion of workplace education and vocational education. This is done with the possibility that plans on the conference will change. The preparation is not under way so it is possible that Workmentor will not be able to attend the conference.

Spring 2012. Partner Meeting 2 in Norway – Workmentor Manual. Host: Skjetlein

Early spring, participants were working on practical issues about the meeting in Norway. Johannes and Ingvild from Skjetlein decided to accept an offer from the Stiklestad Hotel at the place where a famous battle in the history of Norway was fought in viking times. Participants would travel to Trondheim airport, use the train or otherwise travel to Verdal and by taxi a few kilometres to Stiklestad hotel.

From VMA three people attended the meeting in Norway. Jóhannes Árnason, Ketill Sigurðarson and Kristín Petra Guðmundsdóttir.

Partner Meeting 2 (PM2) in Stiklestad in Norway. May 3rd – 4th 2012

We stayed three nights at the hotel and had all meals there also. This turned out to be beneficial to the work because we could go to our rooms if needed and we could make use of lounges and other facilities in the hotel for smaller meetings and group work. Ingvild and Bente from Skjetlein had prepared the meeting and made arrangements.

The work done at the meeting was mainly reviewing the report from Philip on the inventory of needs and the materials available from Gower College and other sources on mentoring. We concluded that the results from the report showed that there was need to work with employers and there was room for a structured discussion and teaching about mentoring methods. Also that using mentoring in the workplace was likely to improve the experience that students have in the workplace and it will increase positive views on the work and the workplace.

The main emphasis was on working through the mentoring materials, reviewing, selecting and writing chapters. Most of the work was done in groups and for each chapter a leading editor was responsible for the text.

In addition to administrative matters we finished the work on the materials and during the summer Don Hawkins from Gower College reviewed and did a final editing so we could use the materials in the course in Nantes in August.

In the meeting we also discussed administrative matters concerning dissemination, reporting on the work done and how to report the use of money.

The minutes of the meeting are found in a document.

The signed attending sheets for both meeting days and a picture of the group are included.

Summer 2012.

In VMA it was decided that three people from VMA would attend the Training of Trainers course in Nantes at the end of August: Jóhannes Árnason, Ketill Sigurðarson and Kristín Petra Guðmundsdóttir. In addition Sólveig Zophoníasdóttir from the School Development Centre at the University of Akureyri was travelling to Nantes. Sólveig will serve as the External Evaluator of the Workmentor Project.

After PM2 in Norway each main editor of each chapter sent in the final version of each chapter. Don Hawkins at Gower College Wales did the final edition, coordinating the text and making sure we were not repeating and leaving out parts of the materials. Don sent the final version July 6th.

Otherwise the work done summer 2012 was mainly working on the agenda of the workshop in Nantes. The first day would be a course in Mentoring to give an example of a course in Mentoring. Michelle Brinkworth would teach the course as Don Hawkins has retired after years of teaching mentoring methods. The second day we would do work on adapting the course to our local group and our circumstances. The third day would be dedicated to administrative matters, interim report and practical things about piloting the mentoring course and reporting on the piloting.

Philip, Bas, Mireille and Johannes were discussing the agenda and practical things in E mail and using Skype. We were discussing the agenda for the meeting and which issues we needed to address in the training.

Participants reported their travel plans and Mireille sent the information to everyone.

Jóhannes at VMA held meetings with Sólveig from the School Development Centre at the University of Akureyri and he met with the Rector of The University of Akureyri to inform him about the project and about the participation in the conference in autumn 2013.

Training of Trainers workshop and PM3 in Nantes, August 29th - 31st 2012.

All participants arrived in Nantes Tuesday 28th 2012. We were 18 people if we count Solveig Zophoníasdóttir who serves as an external evaluator.

See the narrative in Icelandic about the trip and the meeting.
The minutes of the meeting are found in a document.
The signed attending sheets for both meeting days and a picture of the group are included.
Also an example of the certificate for attending the workshop.
All participants got a certificate and the plan is to give such a certificate to all the people attending the Mentor training workshops in each country.

In short, the mentoring workshop and the meeting proved successful for the partnership. Michelle Brinkworth from Gower College, Wales, lead us through a short version of the mentoring workshop the first day. The second day we worked on finding out how to implement this with workplaces and in our own setting in each country. Tanja from Finland also presented a Post Event Evaluation survey so that we could comment on the training and the meeting. She also introduced a survey to use after the piloting, both for the

trainers and the future mentors trained in the piloting phase. The two surveys are parts of an internal evaluation so we can present some data on the success of the work in the project. The third day each partner presented a plan and possibilities of implementing the piloting of the mentor training.

Mireille, Nicolas and Jeanne - Marie from Jules Rieffel had organized a good programme and we enjoyed the city of Nantes and the wines and cheese along with good food. In all this turned out to be a very useful meeting for the project to learn about mentoring and to organize the piloting phase.

When returning to our homes in each country we hope the meeting and workshop in Nantes will prepare us for the main task of the project, of piloting the materials. This includes a few things: Introducing the idea of a workmentor to employers. Asking employers to find volunteers (preferably not instructing people to become mentors) from their group of workers. Organizing a course for mentors and following this with a survey and feedback from students in a relationship with a mentor.

Mireille sent out the cost overview for everyone taking part in the PM3 and Training of Trainers in Nantes.

Tanja from Axxell in Finland did some work on the post event evaluation and we sent it out to everyone. Tanja will gather the answers and we will make a report in the outcome.

This concludes the first half of the work on the Workmentor Project.

Second year

The items on the agenda for the Workmentor project during the second year are mainly:

Piloting the Workmentor workshop using the materials from the manual.

Gathering information from participants in the workshops about their experience and if this has changed ideas about, and the methods used, when working with students in the workplace.

Reporting the outcomes of the piloting, both how the piloting was done and also reporting the answers and feedback given by participants (workmentors).

PM4 in Finland in April 2013. There we need to discuss the outcome from the piloting and work on necessary changes of the manual. Also we need to decide the organization of the final conference.

Preparing the final version of the manual in each country will be the main work summer 2013 in addition to the preparation for the final conference in Akureyri. Also working on the necessary documents and reports for the final report.

PM5 and final conference will be held in Akureyri, Iceland, autumn 2013. The plan is to take part in a local (partly international) conference on education. At the conference the Workmentor project hopefully will be able to present the project, ideas, materials and outcomes. Also it is possible that the partnership will organize a workshop / discussion on workplace education to make use of the knowledge of the partners about organizing and implementing workplace education and cooperation between schools and workplaces.

Final report will be delivered autumn 2013.